

Recommendations by the Accreditation Team and Report of the Accreditation Visit for Professional Preparation Programs at Whittier College

Professional Services Division

March 24, 1999

Overview of This Report

This agenda report includes the findings of the Accreditation Team visit conducted at Whittier College. The report of the team presents the findings based upon reading the Institutional Self-Study Reports, review of supporting documentation and interviews with representative constituencies. On the basis of the report, an accreditation recommendation is made for the institution.

Accreditation Recommendations

- (1) The Team recommends that, based on the attached Accreditation Team Report, the Committee on Accreditation make the following accreditation decision for Whittier College and all three of its credential programs:

ACCREDITATION

On the basis of this recommendation, the institution is authorized to recommend candidates for the following Credentials:

- Multiple Subject CLAD Emphasis
- Single Subject
- Administrative Services
 - Preliminary
 - Professional

- (2) Staff recommends that:

- Whittier College's response to the preconditions be accepted.
- Whittier College be permitted to propose new credential programs for approval by the Committee on Accreditation.
- Whittier College be placed on the schedule of accreditation visits for the 2004-2005 academic year.

Background Information

Whittier College, founded in the City of Whittier in 1887 by members of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), is located at the base of the Puente Hills, 18 miles southeast of downtown Los Angeles. Although Whittier is primarily a liberal arts institution, the number of students in their credential program has risen dramatically in recent years. Whittier is also known for its Law School, with nearly 700 students.

Whittier College offers programs leading to the Multiple Subject Credential with CLAD Emphasis, the Single Subject Credential in 13 content areas, and the Preliminary and Professional Administrative Services Credentials. There are approximately 120 candidates in the Multiple Subject CLAD Emphasis, and thirty-five in the Single Subject Program (about half are enrolled in the Single Subject CLAD Program). Some undergraduates, who are in their junior year, complete core credential requirements prior to graduation and then student teach in the fifth year; others complete the entire program as graduate students. Additional candidates enter credential programs for the first time as graduate students. Approximately thirty candidates are pursuing the Preliminary or Professional Administrative Services Credential.

Preparation for the Accreditation Visit

The Commission staff consultant was assigned to the institution in Spring, 1997, and met with institutional leadership initially around that time. Over the next two years, the consultant met with staff and faculty, program directors and institutional administration. The meeting led to decisions about team size, team configuration, standards to be used, format for the institutional self-study report, interview schedule, and logistical and organizational arrangements. In addition, telephone, e-mail and regular mail communication was maintained between the staff consultant and institutional representatives. The Team Leader, Doug Robinson, was selected in August 1998. The team size was agreed upon in March, 1997.

Preparation of the Institutional Self-Study Report

The Institutional Self-Study Report was prepared beginning with responses to the Common Standards. These responses were developed in reference to all three programs and for the unit as a whole. This was followed by a separate response to the Program Standards. The institution decided to use option one (California Program Standards) in the *Accreditation Framework* for all three programs, Multiple Subject CLAD Emphasis, Single Subject, and Administrative Services.

Selection and Composition of the Accreditation Team

Decisions about the structure and size of the team were made cooperatively between the Education Department chair, education faculty, and the Commission Consultant. It was agreed that there would be a team of five consisting of a Team Leader, and four team members. The Commission Consultant selected the team members to participate in the review. Team members were selected because of their expertise, experience, and adaptability. They were trained in the use of the *Accreditation Framework*.

Intensive Evaluation of Program Data

Prior to the accreditation visit, team members received copies of the appropriate institutional reports and information from Commission staff on how to prepare for the visit. The COA Team Leader and members examined the college responses to the Common Standards and the Program Standards. The on-site phase of the review began on Monday, March 22, 1999. The team arrived on Sunday afternoon and began their deliberations with one another. It included a review of the accreditation procedures and organizational arrangements for the COA team members.

On Monday and Tuesday, March 22 and 23, the team collected data from interviews and reviewed institutional documents according to procedures outlined in the *Accreditation Handbook*. There was extensive consultation among the team members with much sharing of information. Lunch on Monday and Tuesday was spent sharing data that had been gathered from interviews and document review. The entire team met on Monday evening to discuss progress the first day, share information about findings, and formulate questions for the mid-visit clarification meeting. Tuesday evening was set aside for additional team meetings and the writing of the team report.

Preparation of the Accreditation Team Report

Pursuant to the *Accreditation Framework*, and the *Accreditation Handbook*, the team prepared a report using a narrative format. For each of the Common Standards, the team made a decision of "Standard Met" or "Standard Not Met." The team had the option of deciding that some of the Common Standards were "Met Minimally" with either Quantitative or Qualitative Concerns. The team then wrote specific narrative comments about each standard providing a finding or rationale for its decision and then outlining perceived Strengths or Concerns relative to the standard.

For the three program areas, the team prepared a narrative report about the general program standards which pointed out any standards that were not met or not fully met and included explanatory information about findings related to the program standards. The team highlighted specific Strengths and Concerns related to the program areas.

The team included some "Professional Comments" at the end of the report for consideration by the institution. These comments are to be considered as consultative advice from the team members, but are not binding on the institution. They are not considered as a part of the accreditation recommendation of the team.

Accreditation Decisions by the Team

After the report was drafted, the team met Tuesday evening for a final review of the report and a decision about the results of the visit. The team discussed each Common Standard and each Program Standard and decided on the basis of interviews and program documents that all Common Standards were fully met and all but one Program Standard was fully met.

The team made its accreditation recommendation based on its findings and the policies set forth in the *Accreditation Framework*. In its deliberations, the team decided that several standards in both Common and Program sections were worthy of being noted in areas of strength and in some cases, areas of concern. Although some areas of concern were noted in the team report, the overall quality of the programs mitigated the concerns. The team did not feel that the concerns were of sufficient magnitude to place any stipulations on the institution. The team then decided on an accreditation decision for the institution. The options were: "Accreditation," "Accreditation with Technical Stipulations," "Accreditation with Substantive Stipulations," or "Denial of Accreditation." After thorough discussion, the team decided to recommend the status of "**Accreditation.**" The recommendation for "Accreditation" was based on the unanimous agreement of the team.

**CALIFORNIA COMMISSION ON TEACHER CREDENTIALING
COMMITTEE ON ACCREDITATION - ACCREDITATION TEAM REPORT**

Institution: Whittier College

Dates of Visit: March 21-24, 1999

**Accreditation Team
Recommendation:** ACCREDITATION

Rationale:

The team recommendation for Accreditation was the result of a review of the Institutional Self Study Report, a review of additional supporting documents available during the visit, and interviews with administrators, faculty, students, local school personnel and other individuals professionally associated with the unit. The decision pertaining to the accreditation status of the unit was based upon the following:

1. Common Standards - The Common Standards were first reviewed one by one and then voted upon by the entire team. All were judged to have been fully met.
2. Program Standards - The Program Standards were first reviewed one by one and then voted upon by the entire team. All were judged to have been fully met, with the exception of one.
3. Overall Recommendation - The decision to recommend Accreditation was, in part, based on team consensus that all Common Standards were met. Although some areas of concern are noted in this report, the overall quality of the programs is good. Furthermore, the team determined that even though there were a few minor concerns, there were compensating strengths in the program area and that a stipulation should not be placed on the institution. Compensating strengths for this program included consistent reports from employers that graduates were well prepared, competent, and effective. The team concluded that all three credential programs were effective and generally of high quality. Therefore, the team reached the decision that the overall evidence clearly supported the above accreditation recommendation.

Team Leader: R. Douglas Robinson
Simi Valley Unified School District

Team Member: Nancy Brashear
Azusa Pacific University

Team Member: Gary Hoban
National University

Team Member: Bettie Bryan Howser
Moreno Valley Unified School District

Team Member: Robert Reimann
Los Angeles Unified School District

DATA SOURCES

				INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED		DOCUMENTS REVIEWED
M	S	A	T			
20	20	6	26	Program Faculty	*	Catalog
			2	Institutional Administration	*	Institutional Self Study
32	12	11	55	Candidates	*	Course Syllabi
12	7	2	21	Graduates	*	Candidate Files
			6	Employers of Graduates	*	Fieldwork Handbook
			4	Supervising Practitioners	*	Follow-up Survey Results
			5	Advisors	*	Needs Analysis Results
			3	School Administrators	*	Information Booklet
			1	Credential Analyst	*	Field Experience Notebook
			7	Advisory Committee	*	Schedule of Classes
					*	Advisement Documents
					*	Faculty Vitae
						Other (Name)

M-Multiple Subject, S-Single Subject, A-Administration, T-Total

Common Standards

Standard 1 – Education Leadership

Standard Met

Whittier College has a dynamic, living vision which is committed to educating the whole person. This is especially evident in the Department of Child Development which includes the Multiple and Single Subject credential programs, Preliminary, and Professional Administrative Services credential programs. It was the unanimous opinion of the students that this vision permeates all of the education programs. They consistently echoed the nurturing support received in the small college setting. The institution has demonstrated through its organizational chart and management structure that it has been, and will remain, committed to the Whittier College's credential programs

Strengths

The positive attitude of faculty, support staff, and students is evident. Adjunct faculty are considered an integral part of a team as evidenced by strong recruitment and retention efforts.

Concerns

None noted.

Standard 2 – Resources

Standard Met

Whittier College has sufficient personnel and other resources to staff each credential program.

Strengths

Its lab school, Broadoaks Children's School, provides a controlled setting for coursework theory to be seen in action. Students participate in teaching lessons that correspond to theories.

Concerns

Although facilities do accommodate faculty and students, more provisions need to be made for privacy for faculty, students and staff.

Although current needs for technology are being met, it is anticipated that the next few years will bring new challenges for public and private institutions to fulfill technology directives from the Commission.

Standard 3 - Faculty

Standard Met

Whittier College's educational faculty is extremely well qualified, comes from a diverse background and delivers an exemplary level of instruction. Students commend the faculty for its blending of real-school, hands-on practicality with a foundation in research, proven practice, and theory.

Strengths

Adjunct faculty are exemplary practitioners in the public schools in the region and full-time faculty are well versed in theory, research, and best practices.

Concerns

Continued efforts to enhance communication among adjunct faculty in the Administrative Services Program, especially in the area of curriculum articulation, should be made.

Standard 4 - Evaluation**Standard Met**

Quality programs are assured through multiple measures of instruction including student and peer reviews. Programs are improved through student evaluations and advisory committees recommendations. Information is also received from employers. Program effectiveness is also indicated through students' high success rate in securing teaching and administrative positions.

Strengths

Advisory council recommendations have been implemented. Field experience placement opportunities for students have been monitored and have been added or deleted through student or supervisor feedback.

Concerns

None noted.

Standard 5 - Admissions**Standard Met**

Strength of programs is evident in the number of students that have enrolled as a result of "word of mouth" referral. Each program has appropriate recruitment documents. Complete information is available to all who inquire about the programs in a fast and efficient manner. Major individual assistance is evident for all inquiries. Admission criteria is very clear.

Strengths

None noted.

Concerns

Enrollments in administration programs is small even though current students and graduates indicate a high level of satisfaction with their preparation. Greater publicity for all credential programs is recommended.

Standard 6 – Advice and Assistance**Standard Met**

Students are comfortable with the quality of advisement received from faculty and staff throughout the Education Department.

Strengths

Students stated emphatically and repeatedly that the quality of advisement, attention to problems and concerns, and quick return of all communications gave them the necessary support for a high degree of success. In many cases, this advisement began as

early as the freshman year and extended into postgraduate work and even beyond.

The faculty and staff are to be commended for their personal caring attitudes and actions that reflect the core values of their mission statement. The number one strength stated by the candidates interviewed was the personal commitment and assistance given to them by the Whittier College faculty and staff.

Concerns

None noted.

Standard 7 – School Collaboration

Standard Met

The faculty and staff are commended for establishing and maintaining an exceptionally high level of rapport within the college, as well as in local school districts and community projects such as the Reading Tutors and The Fifth Dimension. The success of Broadoaks Children's School is a result of clear collaboration between the Education Department and this lab school. All of these components have contributed to creating a positive learning environment for education students, administrators, school district personnel, and children/youth.

Strengths

The institution has clearly defined procedures for participating in the activities above. The coordinator of Student Teaching Services facilitates collaboration between Whittier College and participating school districts, and also the Broadoaks Children's School

Concerns

None noted.

Standard 8 – District Field Supervisors

Standard Met

Formal guidelines are in place to facilitate selection of field supervisors for "teachers of record" and traditional student teacher placements. Students commented that they felt supported by their college student teaching supervisors, who work closely with their district site supervisors consisting of one of the following: Principal, assistant principal, master teacher, mentor teacher, or resource teacher.

Strengths

Procedures and documentation are clear and easy to follow.

Concerns

None noted.

Program Standards

Multiple Subject CLAD Emphasis/Single Subject) Credential Programs

Findings on Standards

Following review of all available information and documentation of the instructional self-study, as well as completion of interviews of candidates, faculty, graduates, employers, site supervisors, college student teacher supervisors, educational support staff, and supervising practitioners, the team finds that all program standards are met in both the multiple subject and single subject programs.

Strengths

Particularly strong components include:

- Collaborations across departments (e.g. teaching resources).
- Broadoaks, the campus lab school, links theory to practice for education students.
- Strong faculty and staff support of student needs with personal connections made to each candidate in the program.
- The design and implementation of the Multiple Subject CLAD Emphasis Credential program.
- Courses designed to blend practical applications (pedagogy) with theory for optimum understanding.
- Courses that are student-centered, constructivist style, with active learning strategies.
- Interaction with, and accountability to, faculty and staff cited as the number one reason for choosing Whittier College.
- Flexibility of such factors as teaching assignment and individual attention to personal needs.
- The credential programs utilizing current methodologies in line with California's Standards for the Teaching Profession.
- Courses in early literacy and literacy across the curriculum preparing all candidates to be teachers of reading.
- Strong, regular support and evaluation of student teachers, whether on contract or with master teachers.
- Small class sizes enhancing individual communication and understanding for teacher education students.

Preliminary Administrative Services Credential Program

Findings on Standards

The major characteristic of the program is its "hands on" practical approach to curriculum with emphasis being given to problem solving activities related to on-the-job issues in school settings. This emphasis was repeatedly noted by current students, graduates, and faculty. While all of these individuals observed that the program blended theory and practice, it should be noted that not all syllabi or student account of course content included evidence of foundational research and theoretical or philosophical underpinnings.

The program design itself is quite coherent and logical and addresses all of the standards. The course offerings provide students with an opportunity to explore all the administrative competencies identified by the Commission. The program reflects current practice and prepares students for entry-level administrative positions.

Field experience was considered a significant and valuable part of the program. Students complete 50 hours of elementary and 50 hours of secondary administrative field activities. This is documented in student portfolios which chronicle their work and which are evaluated by a site supervisor and a faculty member.

The preliminary administrative services credential programs meets all program standards with the exception of standard 30, "Use of Technology," which is minimally met. This conclusion was reached after interviews with students, faculty, and administrators in the field. Documents, including student field experience portfolios, were evaluated.

Standard 30: Use of Technology

Standard Met Minimally Qualitative Concerns

There is a lack of evidence regarding the use of technology in the program. Students reported that they use computers personally, in their work at school, for presentations, and for research. However, they note that no course deals with the administrative uses of technology, including activities such as academic scheduling, attendance accounting, budgeting, and record keeping applications. Efforts to infuse the use of technology more directly into existing courses or to add a course should be considered. A proposal to address this concern has been made and is promising.

Strengths

The close relationship and bond between faculty and students is noteworthy. Also repeatedly acknowledged is the value of small class size.

While virtually all competencies are well addressed, human resource administration and organizational leadership appear to be especially strong. In the area of curriculum and instruction, it remains unclear where methods of instructional supervision, including but not limited to clinical supervision, are covered, although they are intended to be a part of Education 514.

Concerns

The first concern centers around bringing adjunct faculty, who teach all of the courses, together to articulate the curriculum in the various courses. Faculty reports that they have great flexibility in determining the content of their specific courses but do not have clear direction concerning content in previous and subsequent courses. It must be noted that a handbook has been prepared to inform faculty of course content and syllabi requirements which is to be used in the future. The second concern refers to the use of technology.

An area which may need strengthening, based on several student interviews, is the degree to which the program prepares future administrators with practical, timely, and acceptable methods to deal with the challenges of racially, linguistic, and economically diverse populations. While diversity is covered in field experiences and in the school and community relations course, the need to be involved in inner city schools should be addressed. Resources such as the Association of Mexican American Educators as well as COBA (Council of Black Administrators) might be considered.

Professional Administrative Services Credential Program

Findings on Standards

The Professional Administrative Services Credential Program is new. At this time only a few courses in the program have been offered. Based upon interviews with current students and faculty, as well as consideration of the program documents, it can be concluded that all program standards appear to be met.

The program is quite small with classes averaging four to six students. While students enjoy the personal attention such a small class gives, the program does not yet allow for the more dynamic exchange a larger group would afford.

Strengths

The program itself is well designed, coherent, and logical. It progresses from an induction seminar through core courses addressing themes identified by the Commission, to an assessment seminar. Students have the opportunity to earn credit for 120 hours of approved non-university work.

In the present program, students have been assigned mentors and have begun a project consistent with a professional development plan. A mentor interviewed for this program reports knowledge of the required activities. Students report a high degree of satisfaction with the program in its present form. They like its flexibility in allowing them to defer core classes to a time more compatible with their administrative schedules and to an overall flexibility in scheduling classes to meet time demands. A highly regarded aspect of the program is its "hands on" curriculum and its building of a support system for new administrators.

Concerns

None noted

Professional Comments

(These comments and observations from the team are only for the use of the institution. They are to be considered as consultative advice from team members, but are not binding on the institution. They are not considered as a part of the accreditation recommendation of the team.)

The credential analyst office is to be commended for its outstanding advisement and service to students in the program.

Multiple CLAD Emphasis/Single Subject Credential Programs

- The Whittier College Single Subject Program Document states that “It is anticipated that a revision of the Single Subject Credential Program will be completed within the next few years as new State guidelines are released. We will develop a CLAD Emphasis Program for all Single Subject credential candidates at that time” (pg. 34). During the on-site visit, it was indicated that CLAD for the Single Subject program is moving ahead with the request for an incremental position to support this program next year. The team strongly urges that inclusion of the CLAD component of the Single Subject credential be acted upon with expediency.
- There were some concerns that not all candidates are participating in enough public school experiences with diverse populations and age groups prior to, or during, student teaching. While involvement in the college lab school is valuable and should be continued, the team recommends more varied public school experiences. This is especially true for candidates teaching on emergency permits. For example, these student teacher candidates could observe and practice teach during release times from their assignment, off-track time times (if teaching on year-round schedule), or immediately following completion of student teaching.
- In response to comments from candidates, faculty, and staff, it has been suggested that the teacher education facilities in Mendenhall do not always lend themselves to optimum privacy. Consideration should be given to this condition. For example, confidentiality of student communications and other such sensitive topics must be guarded. It is suggested that a closed room in proximity to the Education Department be identified for private communications until the physical facilities are changed.

Administrative Service Credential Programs

- The department is to be commended for its leadership in strengthening the Preliminary Credential, and starting the professional credential program.